

**Environmental Restoration (ER) Project
Cerro Grande Fire
Accelerated Action Information Sheet**

**Potential Release Site (PRS) 18-011 - Soil
Containment**

Technical Area (TA)-18 is located off Pajarito Road near the confluence of Pajarito Canyon and Threemile Canyon. The principal activities at TA-18 are the design, construction, research, development, and application of experiments that involve chain reactions of atoms splitting fast enough to be self-sustaining (called nuclear criticality).

PRS History: PRS 18-011 is a concrete pad and surrounding soil at a former generator building that was reportedly contaminated with mercury during its removal in the mid 1950s. The concrete foundation, covered by approximately two feet of fill, is still in place. According to a Laboratory employee, mercury was present in some of the generator switches and on one occasion, a mercury-containing glass tube on one of the switches broke, spilling 1-2 cubic centimeters of mercury onto the concrete pad and possibly onto the surrounding soil. The Laboratory employee further reported that the Health Division had cleaned up the mercury spill using sulfur powder. Shortly before the ER Project sampled at the site, nearby trenching for unrelated utility work, exposed a corner of the buried concrete generator building foundation, thus allowing its location and orientation to be determined. Four equally spaced sampling locations were selected outside the square perimeter of



the remaining foundation slab; a fifth sample was collected at the center of the

pad. Mercury was not detected in any of the samples.

PRS 18-011 is not listed on the Hazardous and Solid Wastes Amendments module of the Laboratory's Hazardous Waste Facility permit. The ER Project has proposed the site for no further action; there are no indications of residual risk at the site.

Issues of Concern: The area upstream of PRS 18-011 burned during the Cerro Grande fire (a fire intensity rating of low to high). There is little potential for erosion or scouring at the site, nor is there any debris that could enter the flood watercourse. The remains of the foundation of the generator building could interfere with flood mitigation efforts.

Accelerated Action Status: ER Project personnel noted that removal of the concrete foundation was a low priority candidate for accelerated action.

Related Documents: November 2, 1995; Notice of Deficiency